Chapter 1 – Discussion points

1. Tragedy of the Commons (Garrett Hardin) – pg 5-6
   1. Leave out candy…it’s no ones (do they take it all? Leave some for other periods? Etc)
   2. Resources open to unregulated exploitation will eventually be depleted
   3. Lobster Fishing Analogy
      1. How best regulate?
   4. Solutions? Which best?
      1. Private ownership?
      2. Government regulation?
      3. People sharing common enforce it’s responsible use
      4. Others
2. Thomas Malthus p5 – British economist
   1. Observed industrial revolution in Europe
   2. Stated need for regulation of population growth
   3. If not
      1. Starvation, war, disease, conflict
   4. Has this happened? Will it?
      1. Africa – HIV, deforestation, overuse of land = not able to farm
   5. Why not as bad as Malthus thought? (Also Paul and Anne Ehrlich’s (1968 book “The Population Bomb”) prediction of famine and conflict)
      1. People had less kids as they became affluent
      2. Technology
3. Ecological Footprint p 6
   1. What is it?
      1. Use of land, water, production of wastes = impacts of our lifestyle on environment
      2. Overshoot – how much beyond we go past the planets ability to support us
      3. Calculated we are depleting resources 30% faster than they can be replenished
   2. Is it real? Do we really see this?
      1. Will it lead to Malthus’ and Ehrlich’s predictions?
      2. Easter Island p 8
         1. Is this the only example?
         2. Mayan and other examples of civilizations that did not sustainably use the environment.
   3. Wealthy nations vs developing nations
      1. Is it fair to have such a different “footprint” or use of resources?
4. Sustainable Development
   1. What needs do we need to meet?
      1. Environmental, economic and social needs = Triple Bottom Line
5. Will things get better or worse? P29
   1. Cornucopian view – ingenuity will answer all problems
   2. Cassandras – doom and gloom predictions
6. Environmental science vs environmentalism

Chapter 2 – Discussion Points

1. Environmental ethics p29
   1. What are ethics? – write it down - good vs. bad, virtue, morality?
   2. How do ethics develop? (do they change over time???)
      1. Why was it ok to enslave humans (up until 1863) but now people worry about lab animals?
      2. More prosperity = more time to think about morals?
      3. Anything else? (What we know from science?)
   3. Environmental ethics
      1. Conserve environment for future generations?
      2. Conserve species (endangered species) or create jobs?
   4. Anthropocentrism
      1. Humans and their well-being – protect environment only if it adds aesthetic value
      2. Nonhumans have no rights
   5. Biocentrism
      1. Give value to living things, nonhuman if has an ethical standing
      2. Would think how something affects humans and other organisms?
      3. Do some organisms have more “rights” than others?
   6. Ecocentric
      1. Actions judged on benefit/harm to whole ecological system (living and non-living)
   7. Where do you fall?
2. Environmental Philosophers
   1. During industrial revolution these guys stopped and looked at what we were doing
   2. John Ruskin (1819-1900) – criticized industrialization – cities “little more than laboratories for distillation into the heavens of venomous smokes and smells”
   3. Ralph Waldo Emerson (1840’s) – transcendentalism
   4. Henry David Thoreau (1840’s) – transcendentalism “nature divine”
   5. Walt Whitman (1840’s) – transcendentalism
   6. John Muir (1838-1914) – advocate for preservation of wilderness (preservation ethic)
   7. Gifford Pinchot (1865-1946) – responsibility to manage land wisely (conservation ethic)
   8. Aldo Leopold – (1887-1949) – Land ethic – view yourself as part of the land
      1. Is there such a thing as “good” and “bad” species? Or do they all have a role in the ecosystem?
3. Preservation vs. Conservation p33
   1. Preservation = protect natural environment in a pristine, unaltered state
      1. Nature has it’s own value, save it for it’s own sake
   2. Conservation = use natural resources, but responsible for using them wisely
      1. Use resources to give greatest good to largest # of people for longest amount of time (now and for future generations)
   3. Where do you stand?
      1. 100 acre old growth forest near our town. It is a public area and people use it to hike, walk, etc. A lumber company comes to town and advertises that they will give everyone in town $500 each if they can cut 50 acres of the forest. It will be put to a vote. Where do you stand? What if it was less $$$, or more $$$?
      2. We have a huge lake – should we keep it as it is, or commercially fish it to feed people? Would this change if we had plenty of food, or not enough?
4. Environmental Services p 40
   1. Water cycle, pollination, nutrient cycling, recreation
5. External costs of goods p 42
   1. Something we think about?
6. GDP – Gross Domestic Product – total monetary value of final goods and services produced by an economy
   1. Doesn’t necessarily measure desirable economic growth
   2. Oil spill – costs of clean up will increase the GDP (clean up supplies, hospitals, etc)
7. GPI – Genuine Progress Indicator p 46
   1. Addition of positive contributions not paid for with money (parenting, volunteering, etc), as well as negatives (pollution, crime etc)
   2. This can be then added/ subtracted to GDP
8. Ecolabeling – products designate on their labels the processes used to produce their goods (usually in an environmentally friendly manner)
9. Pg 54 - #6 “Think It Through”